



Department of Justice

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27 DEFENDANTS INDICTED IN SCHENECTADY-BASED RACKETEERING AND DRUG CONSPIRACIES

Albany, New York—United States Attorney Richard S. Hartunian announced the unsealing of two indictments returned by a federal grand jury for the Northern District of New York in Albany, New York which, in total, charge twenty-seven individuals with a federal racketeering conspiracy and/or federal drug felonies. Thirteen defendants are charged with conspiracy to violate the Racketeering Enterprise and Corrupt Organization Act (RICO) from 2004 to the present time. Nineteen defendants are charged with conspiracy to distribute and possess with the intent to distribute crack cocaine and heroin, in Schenectady County and elsewhere, from January 2004 through the present. Eight defendants are charged with conspiracy to distribute and possess with the intent to distribute crack cocaine, in Schenectady County and elsewhere, from June 1, 2011 through November 15, 2011.

The defendants, all of Schenectady, charged in the RICO conspiracy are:

1. Kervon Blanchard, a/k/a Swurve, age 18
2. Walter J. Cobbs, a/k/a Mister, age 19
3. Lameik Degroate, a/k/a La Gunz, age 20
4. Roland Evans, a/k/a Green Eyes, age 26
5. Marvin D. Hill, a/k/a Heaters, Reggie, age 27
6. Joseph M. Jarvis, a/k/a Comf, age 23
7. Jabree Jones, a/k/a Breezy, age 19

8. Kevin D. McGough, a/k/a Kev, age 22
9. Jamell S. Modest, a/k/a Money Mel, age 22
10. Larell A. Moody, a/k/a Relly, El-Rells, L-Rellz, age 19
11. Darius G. Smith, a/k/a D, age 29
12. Antonio Sturdivant, a/k/a Butchie, Hot Ones, age 29
13. Qaraan West, a/k/a Q-Berrow, age 19

The indictment charges that these thirteen individuals were members and associates of a criminal organization in Schenectady, New York, known as the “Uptown Gang” or “Gunners Gang,” whose members and associates engaged in acts involving attempted murder, robbery, and drug trafficking, within the Northern District of New York and elsewhere. The Uptown/Gunners Gang operated in the central and eastern section of the City of Schenectady. This territory is bordered roughly by State and Albany Streets to the south, Brandywine Avenue on the west, toward Fehr Avenue on the east and Bradley Street on the north. The Uptown/Gunners territory also included the Steinmetz and Southgate housing blocks off of Albany Street and Foster Avenue. One of the principal activities of the Uptown/Gunners Gang and its members was the sale of controlled substances. Uptown/Gunners Gang members routinely armed themselves with firearms in order to protect their territory, to protect their drug trade, to project a violent attitude to rival gang members, and to retaliate against any rival gangs who committed acts of violence against Uptown/Gunner Gang members. Uptown/Gunners Gang members in the gang territory demonstrated a propensity to do one or more of the following: (1) engage in drug trafficking; (2) protect the gang territory, (3) engage in gang-related violence; and/or (4) retaliate against rival gangs for acts of violence or disrespect. Uptown/Gunners Gang members gained membership and stature in the gang by demonstrating a proficiency in one or more of these areas.

The Indictment alleges 39 overt acts that were committed in Schenectady in furtherance of the RICO conspiracy: 21 of the overt acts involve the distribution or possession of crack cocaine with intent to distribute; 5 acts involve firing handguns at rival gang members or others; 4 involve robbery; 4 involve selling firearms; and 4 involve other firearms possession.

The maximum possible penalty upon conviction of this RICO conspiracy charge is life imprisonment and a fine of \$250,000.

The following defendants, all of Schenectady, are charged in Count Two of the same Indictment in a narcotics conspiracy that is related to the RICO conspiracy. They are:

1. Kervon Blanchard, a/k/a Swurve, age 18
2. Walter J. Cobbs, a/k/a Mister, age 19
3. Jacqueline Cummings, age 24
4. Lameik Degroate, a/k/a La Gunz, age 20
5. Sarah Dellarocco, age 24
6. Toni Dellarocco, age 23
7. Roland Evans, a/k/a Green Eyes, age 26
8. Brianna Grimes, age 20
9. Marvin D. Hill, a/k/a Heaters, Reggie, age 27
10. Joseph M. Jarvis, a/k/a Comf, age 23
11. Jabree Jones, a/k/a Breezy, age 19
12. Melissa B. Majewski, age 24
13. Kevin D. McGough, a/k/a Kev, age 22
14. Jamell S. Modest, a/k/a Money Mel, age 22
15. Larell A. Moody, a/k/a Relly, El-Rells, L-Rellz, age 19
16. Andre Porter, Jr., a/k/a Legend, age 24

17. Darius G. Smith, a/k/a D, age 29

18. Antonio Sturdivant, a/k/a Butchie, Hot Ones, age 29

19. Qaraan West, a/k/a Q-Berrow, age 19

These defendants are charged with conspiracy to distribute and possess with the intent to distribute more than 280 grams of crack cocaine and heroin, in Schenectady County and elsewhere, from January 2004 through the date of this Indictment.

If convicted, the defendants face a mandatory minimum term of imprisonment for 10 years, a maximum term of life imprisonment, a fine of \$10,000,000, and a life term of supervised release.

The following defendants, all of Schenectady, are charged by separate Indictment in a narcotics conspiracy. They are:

1. Eric Bell, a/k/a Glasses, age 41

2. Diana L. Bouck, age 37

3. Jesus Davilla, a/k/a Ghost, age 33

4. Jonathon Jackson, a/k/a Hood, age 22

5. Davell Lee, a/k/a Drama, age 29

6. Clyde C. Logan, age 22

7. Dominique N. Miller, age 25

8. Equan Mongo, age 36

These defendants are charged with conspiracy to distribute and possess with the intent to distribute more than 28 grams of crack cocaine in Schenectady County and elsewhere, from June 1, 2011 through November 15, 2011.

If convicted, four of these defendants face a mandatory minimum term of imprisonment for 5 years, a maximum term of imprisonment for 40 years, a fine of up to \$5 million, and a life term

of supervised release. Four of these defendants are alleged to have prior felony drug convictions, and thus to face a mandatory minimum term of imprisonment for 10 years, a maximum term of life imprisonment, and a fine of up to \$8 million: Jesus Davilla, Davell Lee, Clyde Logan, and Equan Mongo.

Kervon Blanchard, Larell Moody, Darius Smith, and Qaraan West have not yet been arrested. All of the other defendants were arrested this morning and were scheduled for their initial appearance and arraignment today at 12:30 p.m. before United States Magistrate Judge David R. Homer in Albany.

The investigation that resulted in these charges was conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the United States Drug Enforcement Administration, the New York State Police, the Schenectady Police Department, the Schenectady County Sheriff's Office, the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision, the Office of the District Attorney of Schenectady County, and the United States Attorney's Office for the Northern District of New York.

United States Attorney Richard S. Hartunian praised the outstanding cooperative efforts of the federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies who participated in this investigation. U.S. Attorney Hartunian emphasized that his Office will continue to work closely with federal, state, and local authorities to prosecute gang members and narcotics traffickers, especially those who engage in violence throughout the Northern District of New York. United States Attorney Hartunian said, "As this case against the Uptown/Gunners Gang demonstrates, we are here to stay. Our partnership is stronger than ever, our desire to work together has never been greater, and our commitment to stamping out gang violence will continue until gangs no longer plague our communities. We take sides in the battle between rival gangs - the side of the community, the law-abiding citizens who deserve safe streets and neighborhoods. We share responsibility for confronting the prevalence and

consequences of gang activity and the devastating impact of drug dealing and violence on our youth. It will take community-wide cooperation to heal divided and dangerous neighborhoods. If we are committed to empowering the next generation of Americans, effectively addressing gangs must be our joint cause."

FBI Special Agent in Charge Clifford C. Holly stated, "I commend the Safe Streets Task Force, prosecutors, and law enforcement professionals for the efforts they have put forth in this investigation. These indictments illustrate how the FBI and our law enforcement partners can work together to bring about an opportunity for change in our community."

New York State Police Superintendent Joseph A. D'Amico said, "This multi-agency investigation and subsequent arrests extinguished an organized criminal network responsible for infusing illegal narcotics into the Schenectady community. This is a solid example of how collaborative law enforcement efforts work to make our communities safer."

DEA Acting Special Agent in Charge Wilbert L. Plummer stated, "A concerted effort from law enforcement arrested these 23 drug traffickers who were peddling crack cocaine throughout the Schenectady and Albany area in New York. This operation resulted in identifying this violent and ruthless organization who were known as the 'Uptown/Gunners' and now they will face the consequences of their criminal actions."

Schenectady County District Attorney Robert M. Carney stated, "The Uptown Gunners, as with the Four Block gang last year, are responsible for much of the gun violence occurring in Schenectady, and we believe our City is a safer place with these arrests. Interagency collaboration and utilization of superior federal statutes maximize the law enforcement response we need to reduce violent crime in our community, and I am grateful to the FBI and to the United States Attorney for spearheading this effort."

Chief Mark R. Chaires of the Schenectady Police Department stated, “On behalf of the citizens of Schenectady, I want to express my sincere gratitude to the federal, state, and local government agencies who partnered with Detectives and Officers of the Schenectady Police Department on this important project. This project was conceived and implemented with one goal in mind – protect Schenectady residents from gang violence associated with the illicit drug market.”

NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision Commissioner Brian Fischer said, “DOCCS continues to work closely with all of our law enforcement partners to ensure that those responsible for these types of crimes are brought to justice. The safety and security of our communities is our highest priority and the resources we have available will continue to contribute to that outcome, both inside and outside our correctional facilities.”

An indictment is merely a formal charge that a defendant has committed a violation of the federal criminal laws, and every defendant is presumed innocent until, and unless, proven guilty.